

# Division of Highway Traffic Safety

The New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety was established under the National Highway Safety Act of 1996. The Division's primary mission is to promote highway traffic safety through prevention, awareness and enforcement efforts. The Division procures and administers federal highway traffic safety grant funds, and coordinates the traffic-safety-related actions of State and local agencies. On an annual basis, the Division also develops a comprehensive, statewide highway traffic safety plan designed to protect motorists and pedestrians along the state's 33,000 miles of roads. For additional information on its mission, accomplishments and initiatives, visit the Division of Highway Traffic Safety Web site [www.NJSafeRoads.com](http://www.NJSafeRoads.com).

## Highlights

### ❖ Declining Road Fatalities —

For the second year in a row, New Jersey registered a decline in overall highway deaths in 2004 — from 733 fatalities in 2003 to 731. The number of alcohol-related fatalities also fell in 2004 — from 275 the prior year to 271. Pedestrian fatalities increased by 2.5 percent to 155, while motorcycle fatalities also climbed from 57 deaths in 2003 to 73 in 2004. Speeding-related fatalities showed a substantial decrease to 2004 with 64 speeding-related road deaths compared to 80 the previous year. The 2004 data continued a positive trend observed in 2003, when roadway deaths declined in several categories as well. The total number of motor vehicle fatalities in New Jersey in 2003 reflected a 5 percent drop from the prior year, while the number of pedestrian fatalities dropped by 22 percent. The number of alcohol-related fatalities also fell in 2003 — from 281 in 2002 to 275, — and motorcycle fatalities declined from 50 in 2002 to 34.

### ❖ Click It or Ticket —

Statewide, an unprecedented 381 police agencies took part in the Division of Highway Traffic Safety's May 2004 "Click It or Ticket" seat belt awareness and enforcement drive, conducting spot enforcement of the State's Primary Seat Belt Law. In all, police issued more than 69,000 seat belt summonses to motorists and passengers who were not buckled up during the two-

week enforcement campaign period. In addition to the enforcement component, New Jersey used approximately \$500,000 in federal funding to conduct a "Click It or Ticket" paid advertising campaign. During a two-week period, the Division aired more than 2,000 one-minute radio spots on 67 stations in New Jersey, New York City and Philadelphia. Results from a seat belt utilization survey conducted in the immediate aftermath of "Click It or Ticket" showed seat belt usage at 82 percent — an all-time high.

### ❖ Child Passenger Safety Partnership —

In 2004, the Division of Highway Traffic Safety worked with the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs' Center for Hispanic Policy, Research and Development on "Partnering for Traffic Safety" — a public awareness initiative aimed at increasing proper child safety seat usage within Hispanic communities. Through the program, the Center offered sub-grants to nine community-based organizations that serve Hispanic populations. Leaders from these community-based organizations were trained in child passenger safety, and in turn delivered information and materials to the populations with whom they work.

### ❖ Public Awareness Radio Campaign —

Throughout 2003-2004, the Division continued its successful campaign of public service radio announcements through partnership with the New Jersey Broadcasters Association. Through this effort, Division messages were heard on every radio station in New Jersey, as well as throughout the metropolitan New York City and Philadelphia markets. The Division used radio public service announcements to increase awareness of new initiatives related to driver distraction and aggressive driving, as well as to remind listeners about such perennial highway safety issues as drinking and driving, pedestrian safety and seat belt usage.

### ❖ Increased Funding Linked to .08 BAC —

Early in 2004, new legislation was signed into law lowering the legal threshold for being convicted of Driving Under the In-



From left to right: Roberto Rodriguez, Director, Gary Poedubicky, Deputy Director

fluence (DUI) from a Blood Alcohol Content of .10 to .08. Enactment of this legislation resulted in increased federal funding to the Division of Highway Traffic Safety for impaired driving enforcement programs, and for related education initiatives. With assistance from the additional funding, the Division undertook a statewide driving enforcement campaign during the summer of 2004 with the theme "You Drink and Drive ... You Lose."

### ❖ Child Passenger Safety Conference —

The Division demonstrated its continuing commitment to child passenger safety by hosting a Child Passenger Safety Technical Conference in September 2003. The event brought together more than 400 child passenger safety advocates from New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Connecticut. Conference highlights included workshops and expert speakers on such issues as transporting children with special needs, enhancing child passenger safety within inner-city populations, and hosting a successful child safety seat check event.

